

# YouTube

## What is YouTube?

YouTube is a video sharing platform that allows you to upload content onto your customized YouTube **Channel**, which lists videos of your choosing – that you or others create. YouTube features comment threads on your channel and videos that you can manage, and a counter that allows you to keep track of who is watching your videos.

## Why Should I Use YouTube?

YouTube is the third most-trafficked website in the world,<sup>1</sup> with over a billion unique visitors each month.<sup>2</sup> It is unparalleled as a platform for hosting and sharing video content, and can be easily integrated with other social media platforms. With YouTube, you can engage with your community in ways that Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ don't – from a content *creation* standpoint – while also having a powerful social aspect as well. YouTube channels also allow for a great deal of customization, and provide opportunities to solidify your branding across platforms. Finally, YouTube provides a powerful analytics tool for all users, so it's easy to track the amount of views you're receiving, which videos generate the greatest engagement, and which countries/demographics contribute most to your view count.

## How Do I Get Started?

YouTube is a Google property, so in order to sign up for a YouTube account you need a Google account. Once you do so, you simply go to YouTube and sign in with your Google credentials, and you will be guided through the process of setting up your channel. You can customize the type of activity you share publicly, the layout of your channel, what type of content you want to display on your channel, and your channel's title, artwork, and icon. You can also **subscribe** to, feature, and comment on the videos of other channels, so you can easily interact with other organizations with whom you may have shared interests or audiences.

*Note on Censorship:* Some countries censor some of YouTube's content, or block the website entirely. As a result, you should make sure that YouTube is a viable option for your host location *before* setting up a channel. If not, consider using Vimeo or another alternative platform.

*Note on Copyright:* Because YouTube is first and foremost a content sharing platform, it is important to make sure you don't upload any copyrighted materials (video, audio, images) without the consent of the owner(s). YouTube maintains a large content-matching database (known as **Content ID**) that will automatically scan anything you upload for copyrighted material. If a match is found, your video could be taken down, advertisements may be placed alongside your video, or your account could receive a copyright warning, or "strike."

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.alexacom/topsites>, 7/16/13.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/yt/press/statistics.html>.